

Photo by Patty Taylor, Water Division. Lost Lake, Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana

## RA McQueen Addresses Oil and Gas Conference in Dallas



RA McQueen, CoS Chancellor, and Region 6 state directors.

RA McQueen spoke at the 4th Biennial Oil and Gas Environmental Conference at the Sheraton Dallas Hotel on December 3. The conference is a collaboration between the University of Texas at Arlington, EPA and industry. Participants learned about new regulatory changes affecting the industry and network with oil and gas industry decision makers.

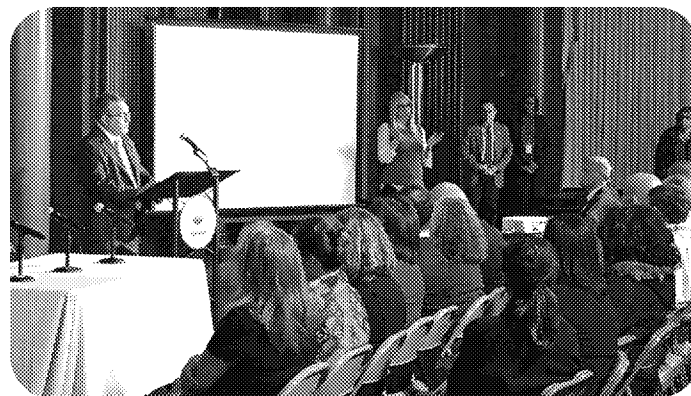
## Regional Honor Award Ceremony

The 2019 Regional Honor Awards Ceremony was held on November 3. The Region recognized 12 Individual Bronze Medal winners, 250 Team Bronze Medal winners, and 81 Named Award winners. In addition, we recognized more than 40 Notable Achievement Award winners from the Office of Land and Emergency Management (OLEM) Program.



[Click to play video >>>>](#)

## Recognizing 35 years of EPA's Indian Policy



RA McQueen, DRA Gray, and CoS Chancellor attended a headquarters ceremony recognizing the 35th Anniversary of the 1984 EPA Indian Policy. EPA was one of the first federal agencies to adopt a formal tribal policy, the principles of which remain the cornerstone for EPA's Indian program today.

## Ensuring Safe Drinking Water



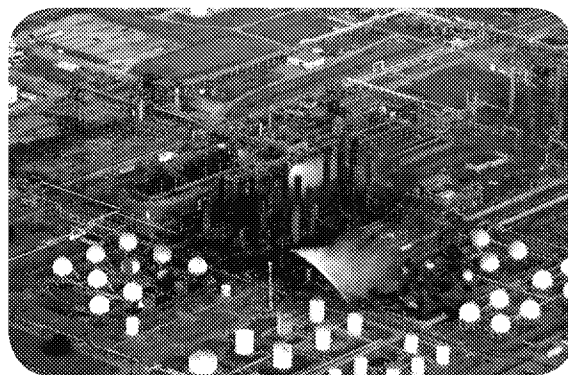
From left to right: Ellen Chang-Vaughan (ECAD), Curry Jones (ECAD), Meaghan Bresnahan (WD) and Alison Fontenot (WD). Not pictured are Jose Rodriguez (WD) and Tonia Biggs (ECAD).

Region 6 staff from the Water Division (WD) and the Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Division (ECAD) worked late on Friday, November 8 to issue a Safe Drinking Water Act Emergency Order to the Ponca Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma. Their Public Water System had two positive hits of e-coli and tribal residents were at an imminent and substantial risk of becoming ill from consuming their drinking water.

## Explosion Response in Port Neches, Texas

At around 1:30 a.m. on November 27, an explosion and subsequent fire occurred at the TPC Group facility in Port Neches, Texas. The explosion was felt throughout the community. OSC Adam Adams and EPA contractors mobilized to the site in the early hours of November 27 to join in Unified Command with Jefferson County, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and TPC. EPA performed air monitoring beginning at 6 in the morning. EPA's Airborne Spectral Photometric Environmental Collection Technology (ASPECT) aircraft was activated and began flights over the site and plume at approximately 8:00 a.m. that day. A secondary explosion occurred at the facility about 2:30 p.m. on the 27th, after which OSCs Philip Rouse and Matt Loesel were activated to the scene. The evacuation zone was extended by the local authorities

from 0.5 miles to 4 miles following the second explosion. EPA has continued air monitoring activities since the 27th both handheld and via ASPECT. Due to material which overtopped the facility's outfall, EPA conducted water sampling as well along the drainage path. A public Story Map and web site have been set up at <https://response.epa.gov/south4groupfire>. EPA will remain in Unified Command until all of the fires are extinguished, air monitoring results show no continued impact, and the drainage path presents no further threat. EPA is part of Unified Command and working with approximately 20 different agencies in response to this incident.



## Smart Sectors Roundtable



RA McQueen addresses Smart Sectors Agriculture event

On November 24, Region 6 welcomed over 50 stakeholders representing 22 agencies from all 5 Region 6 states to the first EPA Agriculture Smart Sectors Roundtable, held at the Regional office. Smart Sectors is a partnership program that provides a platform for EPA and its regulated Ag sectors to develop practical approaches that better protect the environment and public health.

## Border Program Anniversary



On Thursday, November 14, the Border 2020 Joint Advisory Committee celebrated 20 years at their 75th meeting in Las Cruces, New Mexico. Guy Donaldson (EPA Region 6 Air and Radiation Division) U.S. Co-chair for the JAC, celebrated the event along with TCEQ Commissioner Bobby Janeck and other senior leadership from the U.S. and Mexico.

We'd like to feature your scenic Region 6 images in the newsletter's front page banner. To submit your photos, simply attach them to an email and send to [R6\\_photos@epa.gov](mailto:R6_photos@epa.gov).



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